



Friends of Manzanar

SPRING 2010

MOVING FORWARD

Groundbreaking on Block 14!



February 13, 2010, was a date all friends of Manzanar had long awaited and will long remember: Manzanar National Historic Site Superintendent Les Inafuku presided over ceremonial groundbreaking for reconstruction of Barracks 1 and 8 on Manzanar's demonstration block, historic Block 14.

At left above, against a background of new February snow on the Sierra crest northwest of camp, Superintendent Les is at the microphone as project general contractor Erick Ammon, former Manzanar detainee Hank Umemoto, Friends of Manzanar founder Lillian Kawasaki, and Manzanar Committee co-chair Bruce Embrey wait their turns.

At left below, Superintendent Les, Lillian, Hank, Bruce and Erick apply shovels at the once and future site of Barracks 1 in the southeast corner of Block 14.



After the ceremony Manzanar History Association hosted a lavish reception in the restored mess hall on Block 14. See photos on page 3.

One of the two barracks will be finished to represent camp living conditions as they existed when the first detainees arrived in the spring of 1942. The other will show how the barracks had evolved by the time camp closed in the fall of 1945. The barracks will help visitors understand the experiences of those who were forced from the Pacific coast and held in inland camps like Manzanar, without due process of law, during World War II. Reconstruction was expected to be well under way by the time of Manzanar Committee's annual Manzanar Pilgrimage on April 24. Join us at the Pilgrimage!



Friends of Manzanar works with the National Park Service and other interested groups to preserve and restore the Manzanar site, and to interpret its stories, resources and lessons, for this and future generations.

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FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT

Aloha and thanks!

Aloha! "How time flies." "My cup runneth over." What understatements! It's staggering how much has happened during my first year at Manzanar...but last year's list can't match all of the projects which we're tackling right now. Especially exciting is that even more great projects have been coming to us: Senator Dianne Feinstein championed funding for the reconstruction of Barracks 1 and 8 in Block 14, and Friends of Manzanar is adding even more value to this by wholeheartedly supporting Manzanar's demonstration block effort.

Amongst other goals, you have and are funding the comprehensive survey of Block 14, detailed research about life in the block, further research about the architectural and furnishing details of the block's structures, interpretive master planning for Block 14, and the huge effort of helping to fund the reconstruction of the Men's and Women's Latrines, plus the Laundry and Ironing Rooms.

Manzanar's annual operating budget allotment covers our day-to-day operations, plus a few preservation, restoration, interpretation and education projects. But, it's the special project funding—e.g. our current projects to develop both Museum and Orchard Management Plans, and a photovoltaic (solar) power project—that allow us to raise the bar. And, it's special consideration from Congress and our everyday citizen FRIENDS—like Friends of Manzanar—that enable us to aim for excellence in our efforts.

Within the articles of this newsletter, you'll find greater details to flesh out what I've only begun to outline here. Although Manzanar is small in size, if you'll read between the lines in these pages, you'll see that your support helps our visitors to understand Manzanar's huge significance, not only to our nation, but to our entire world.

Thank you for being our Friends! Please come and visit Manzanar! Aloha!

Les Inafuku



michael pietrobon photo

A "New" Mess Hall on Block 14

From this (in 2002) . . .



nps photo

Barracks 1 and 8 will be the second and third buildings reconstructed on Manzanar's demonstration block. The first, originally built to military specifications during World War II, was trucked onto the site in 2002.

That building has become the newest mess hall at Manzanar – the first since the camp closed in the 1940s – and was the venue for Manzanar History Association's reception following the February 13, 2010, groundbreaking ceremony.

The restored building faithfully recreates the structure and furnishings of the mess halls that stood on the northwest corners of each of the camp's 36 blocks during World War II. With the addition of interpretive exhibits to be installed later this year, the mess hall will be ready to help visitors better understand the circumstances in which Manzanar detainees found themselves.

The story of the newest mess hall began nearly 10 years ago when the National Park Service found the building at the Bishop airport, acquired it, and trucked it to the site in four pieces. Long months and years of careful work by Manzanar's maintenance staff and Park Service reconstruction specialists brought the building back to life in time to play its part in the groundbreaking celebration.

. . . to this (in 2008) . . .

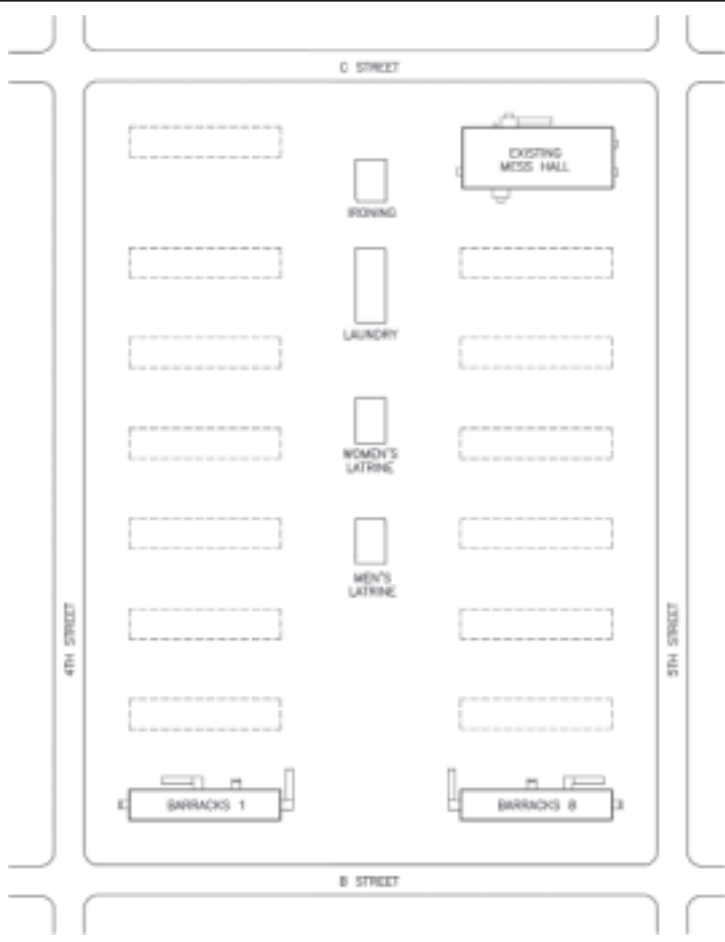


. . . to this (February 13, 2010)!



Manzanar's Demonstration Block

Historic Block 14, the Manzanar demonstration block, is just a few steps from the Interpretive Center. Walk out the west doors (behind the roster displays) and look to your right for the reconstructed mess hall. Or, from the parking lot, walk or drive a short distance along the tour road. Below is a view across Block 14 from the groundbreaking at Barracks 1 toward the mess hall. The diagram of Block 14, to the right, shows the Barracks 1 and 8 locations and the mess hall, as well as locations of latrines and utility buildings to be reconstructed later.



The demonstration block is gaining momentum, and soon will be an even more valuable tool for sending the message that exclusion, evacuation and confinement without due process must never happen again.

It is an exciting moment for all friends of Manzanar, but these friends also know that to keep the momentum going much hard work and willingness to contribute in other ways will be needed.

The construction costs for Barracks 1 and 8, the women's latrine, ironing room and laundry room have been underwritten by the federal government, and much credit is due Senator Dianne Feinstein.

Manzanar Superintendent Les Inafuku has asked Friends of Manzanar to raise funds for the construction of the men's latrine building and the design and production of exhibits on

Block 14.

Friends funded a required preliminary survey of Block 14, in 2009, by archeologist Jeffrey Burton, who since 1993 has conducted investigations and research at Manzanar and other sites where Pacific Coast residents of Japanese ancestry were detained during World War II. Burton's many publications include the landmark study *Confinement and Ethnicity: An Overview of Japanese American Relocation Sites*.

The Superintendent also asked Friends to fund specified research and planning for the demonstration block. Fundraising for this purpose was immensely helped by a generous lead gift from true friends of Manzanar Judy and Fred Blue.

The research is being done, under the supervision of Chief of Interpretation Alisa Lynch, in Manzanar's own extensive

Needs Many Generous Friends



nps photo

jeffrey burton surveys block 14

Be a Generous Friend

Be a Manzanar volunteer. Volunteers can help Manzanar in many ways, both at the site and elsewhere. It's rewarding work. Contact Park Ranger Carrie Andresen-Strawn, at (760) 878-2194 ext. 2714 or Carrie_Andresen@nps.gov, for information.

Share your memories. Friends of Manzanar strongly supports the Manzanar oral history program. If you were incarcerated at Manzanar or another camp, or were WRA staff or an MP, please share your story with us. Contact Park Ranger Richard Potashin at (760) 878-2194 ext. 2712 or Richard_Potashin@nps.gov.

Be a Friend of Manzanar. Your contributions to Friends of Manzanar directly benefit Manzanar National Historic Site by enabling us to meet our commitments to help fund projects such as those described in this newsletter. To contribute, make your check payable to Friends of Manzanar and send it, with the form on the back page, to Friends of Manzanar, Post Office Box 357, Independence, CA 93526. Contributions to Friends of Manzanar are tax deductible to the full extent provided by law. Thank you!

collection of primary sources (by researchers Rose Masters and Sky Hatter) and in Los Angeles area archives (by former Japanese American National Museum researcher Marie Masumoto), to develop interpretive materials representing conditions and experiences throughout the Manzanar site.

The planning is to be performed by Krister Olmon, Inc., of Los Angeles, which has been asked to prepare an interpretive master plan for Block 14. Working with Heather Lindquist of Harvest Moon Studio in Los Angeles, Krister Olmon has been directly involved in developing the excellent Manzanar Interpretive Center displays as well as interpretive materials to be installed later this year in the Block 14 mess hall.

On Block 14, and elsewhere at Manzanar, there is much to do and many costs to be underwritten. Please help us help Manzanar!



rose masters, alisa lynch, sky hatter
in the manzanar library

A Manzanar Album 2009-2010



Doug Heron and Janis Leger, brother and sister whose mother lived in Lone Pine during the war years, often return to visit the Manzanar site. They are true friends of Manzanar who have donated not only money but also images such as the beautiful view at left: Mount Williamson from the south firebreak beside Block 14, as it appeared in April 2009. If you have photos to share we'd love to see them.



The chicken ranch, southwest of camp (left), the orchard near Children's Village (right), and the reservoir, and one builder's date stamp, northwest of camp (below), all as they appeared in February 2010. (Bob Mansfield photos.)



Friends of Manzanar Looks Ahead

Friends of Manzanar takes pride in what it has done for Manzanar in the past – reconstruction of Guard Tower number 8, restoration of vegetation at the west entrance to the Interpretive Center, purchase of archival materials, and support for many other Manzanar activities – and what it is doing today to support the redevelopment of Block 14. It also looks optimistically toward its future as it works with the National Park Service and other interested groups.

Currently high on the Friends wish list is an initiative to provide additional funding, through grants and donations, to expedite collection of oral histories from those who can still tell the stories of the wartime experiences of Americans of Japanese ancestry.

National Park Service staff recognizes that “oral history is the critically important foundation of all interpretive and educational efforts for visitors to Manzanar.” Park Ranger Richard Potashin (shown here,



recording Jack Kunitomi's recollections after the February 2010 groundbreaking), assisted by Park Ranger Kirk Peterson and Chief of Interpretation Alisa Lynch, has conducted most of Manzanar's oral history interviews. The Park Service has partnered with Densho, the Seattle-based nonprofit online archive, to collect, process and archive these oral histories, often using video technology to retain images of the persons they interview as well as their words. Friends of Manzanar seeks to supplement these efforts. There is much still to be done and time is growing short.

Friends president Dennis Otsuji, an award-winning landscape architect, continues to work with the Park Service to develop landscaping at the east entrance to the Interpretive Center. The project's design phase has begun to move forward in the early months of 2010. When completed the landscaping will form an historic entry to the Interpretive Center, recalling the many



Merritt Park, 2010

beautiful gardens constructed by Japanese Americans at Manzanar during World War II.

Looking farther into the future, Friends hopes to develop the historic guayule lath house area, near the southwest corner of the site, in which guayule plants were grown during World War II as an experimental source of rubber.

Friends continues to stand by to help with capital projects at Manzanar as needs are identified and the Park Service requests Friends' help. The next phase of reconstruction on Block 14, extending to the latrines and utility buildings in the center of the block, is of particular interest to Friends. And the Park Service continues to receive reports of historic buildings which might be available to purchase and return to the site. Any capital fundraising drive will present new challenges to Friends and its donors.

Be a friend: Help Friends of Manzanar meet the challenges of the future!



Come to Manzanar Meet Friends' Directors!



WE'RE GLAD IT'S MOVING FORWARD!— Friends of Manzanar directors Rose Ochi, Lillian Kawasaki, Bill Michael, Dennis Otsuji and Dick Mansfield stage their own cheerful reenactment of the Block 14 ground-breaking. Directors Mas Okui and Bruce Saito were with us in spirit. Lillian was the founder and first president of Friends of Manzanar, and Rose, Bill, Dennis and Mas were all members of the Manzanar Advisory Commission in the early days of Manzanar National Historic Site. The directors will return to Manzanar on April 24, 2010, for their annual meeting at the time of the Manzanar Pilgrimage. Come meet them then!



Yes! I/we want to help preserve and restore the Manzanar site.

Please choose your level of support:

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